THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST

Volume VIII APRIL, 1945 Number 2

"LET'S LOOK AT THE RECORD"[1]

TO THOSE of you who were old enough to listen to speeches delivered over the radio in the presidential campaign of 1928 and who were not inhibited by your political predilections from listening to the Democratic candidate, it will not be necessary for me to explain the provenance of the title of my paper. Obviously Al. Smith used the word "record" in the very broad sense of evidence, but he usually found his evidence in the form of documents that constitute records in a more specific sense. The importance of consulting the original official records, if we are to know the truth, was well illustrated by Mr. Warren's brilliant exposé of Fourth-of-July myths at our last meeting. That original records are valuable for checking the authenticity of printed versions of them, of secondary writings, and of memory and tradition is well known, at least to scholars and lawyers; but it is not so well known that much the greater part of the recorded experience of men as individuals and in their institutional relationships exists only in the form of unprinted records.

Admitting the literal truth of this statement, some may think that, nevertheless, all or nearly all the really important records either have been or ultimately will be printed and thus be assured of preservation and availability. As a matter of fact, however, the records that get printed are as a rule those that someone believes a considerable number of people will want to read, and they are not by any means necessarily the records that embody the most potentially useful human experience. An administrator may determine a course of action, a judge may render an important decision, or a scholar may make a significant contribution to knowledge on the basis of records that no one would think of printing. A generation or two ago some scholars had hopes that all documents of importance for research in American history might be printed, but the tremendous

[1] A paper read by the Archivist of the United States before the Literary Society of Washington, D.C., December 9, 1944.

increase in the bulk of documentation, the widening scope of the historians' interests, and the realization that there are other ways of making records available for use when they are needed have put an end to that dream.

It is evident, therefore, that, unless much of value in recorded experience is to be lost, provision must be made for the preservation and availability of records either in their original forms or in inexpensive photographic reproductions.

Such then is the raison d'être of such establishments as the National Archives of the United States. But the word "archives" seems to have been an unfortunate selection for use in the name of the institution. It is not only, as an assistant of mine once said, that many people when they encounter the word "archives" do not know whether one is supposed to eat them or to use flit on them! More serious is the fact that so many different conceptions or misconceptions of the meaning of the word prevail among those who are aware that it has some relation to records or documents. A few days ago we were all regaled with the information in Jerry Klutz's column in the *Washington Post* that an archivist is a "dead file clerk." By printing the three words without hyphens, an amusing play upon the expressions "dead-file clerk" and "dead file-clerk" was achieved, but the former is about as objectionable as the latter to archivists. Archives are not dead files, though bodies of archives may and frequently do contain files that are dead and ought to be buried. The belief that archives are dead files is responsible for the theory that they should be stored in warehouses with no provision for making them available for use, though why they should be preserved at all if they are really dead is difficult to see.

Another prevalent misconception is that archives are old documents—musty, of course, and of no practical value—that ought to be preserved as museum pieces. On a slightly higher level is the belief that the word "archives" is synonomous with "historical manuscripts" and that archives are preserved solely for use by historians as source materials. To some, archives are public records as distinct from private papers, to others official documents are archives regardless of whether they are or should be in official custody.

A fundamental fallacy that runs through most of these misconceptions is the supposition that a single document may be an "archive" and that therefore a number of such documents constitute archives.

Actually the word "archives" is one of those collective nouns, without a reputable singular form, of which there are so many in the English language, such as "statistics," "politics," "goods," "clothes," and "headquarters." The word "archives" connotes a body of related documents that, because of their possible evidential value, are preserved as records by the agency that created or received them or by its legitimate successor. It may also mean two or more such bodies of records or even an institution that has the custody of such a body or bodies of records. The agency that has created the records is an essential part of the concept of archives. In other words, unless a body of records can be said to constitute archives of some governmental agency, organization, institution, family, or even person it cannot be said to possess the characteristics of archives. Thus we may speak of the archives of the government of the United States, the archives of the State Department, the archives of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, the archives of the Literary Society, the Jones family archives, or the archives of John Doe, though usually the odds and ends of documents preserved by John Doe because of their possible evidential value are so fragmentary and lacking in integration as hardly to justify their being called his archives.

It will be apparent then from this definition that archival documents may be old or very recent, current or noncurrent from the point of view of administration, active or inactive from the point of view of use, interesting or uninteresting, significant or insignificant; also that they may be handwritten, typewritten, processed, or printed; and finally that they may take the form of drawings, paintings, photographs (including motion picture film), diagrams, charts, maps, and even sound recordings. All that is necessary is that they be officially preserved for their evidential value as a part of the body of records of some agency.

The increased facility with which records are made today as compared with a few generations ago and the increased amount and complexity of activities that need to be recorded have caused some concern in recent years lest society be overwhelmed by an unmanageable mass of records. There is some justification for this concern. The total quantity of records of the federal government now in existence in Washington and in the field is estimated today at seventeen million cubic feet and it is certain that the quantity has doubled in the last six years. But the solution of the problem of bulk

is not to be found in dispensing with records of man's experience. It will probably be found in a combination of three other procedures. The first of these is birth control in record-making, so that ephemeral documents that have no real evidential value will not be preserved as records at all, and real progress is being made in this direction by a number of agencies of the federal government. The second procedure is the disposal of vast quantities of routine records as soon as they have outlived their possible evidential value. It has been estimated recently that not more than twenty per cent of the records of the federal government now in existence will have sufficient value to warrant their continued preservation after the lapse of a few years. Prompt disposal of records as soon as they have outlived their usefulness can be accomplished, however, only if plans for their ultimate fate are made in advance and they are segregated from permanently valuable records as they are filed. The third procedure for the solution of the problem of bulk is the reproduction of entire series or groups of records in the form of microphotographs, which occupy less than five per cent of the space of the originals and can be read with ease in a reading machine. The possibilities of this technique had not been fully explored when the outbreak of the war shut off most of the necessary supplies and equipment, but enough progress had been made to make it certain that the physical bulk of many bodies of records can be greatly reduced without losing any of their record content.

Reduction of records by microphotography does not in itself, of course, reduce the number of documents in existence, and some research scholars are appalled at the thought that they or their successors will soon be confronted with such an enormous number of documents that they can never make effective use of them. The solution of that problem is to be sought in effective control over those bodies of records that are selected for permanent preservation. That does not mean that archival materials should be classified by subject and catalogued document by document as individual books are catalogued in a library. When it is realized that the 650,000 cubic feet of records now in the National Archives comprise several hundred million individual documents, it is obvious that such treatment would be impossible, even if it were desirable. An archival document, however, although it may be physically separate from all other documents, is not an independent item as are most books

and pamphlets. It is, as a rule, a part of a file or a dossier, which in turn is part of a series, which is a part of the body of records or archives of an agency; and much of its significance depends upon its relationship to the other documents in these categories. It is a fundamental principle of archives administration, therefore, that the integrity of the record groups as orginally created must be preserved. Moreover, if this is done, the original classification schemes, indexes, and other finding aids that enable the records to be used while they were current can serve the same purpose after they are transferred to the custody of an archival agency.

That does not mean, however, that the archivist who takes over noncurrent records has nothing to do in order to make them readily available for use. Apart from the facts that they may be in disorder and have to be rearranged or the original indexes may have been lost, it is often the case that the use that is made of noncurrent records is very different from the use that was made of them when they were current, and as a consequence different types of finding aids are necessary. The fundamental problem, however, is to provide the searcher with an over-all picture of what bodies of records are available and then to provide him with a more detailed breakdown of the records in those groups that appear to him to be promising. If his search can be quickly narrowed down to a few series or files or boxes of documents, it need not matter to him that there are hundreds of millions of other documents in the repository.

In the National Archives the 650,000 cubic feet of records in custody have now been divided into some two hundred record groups, most of which consist of all the noncurrent records of an existing or former agency or subagency of the government. Numbers have been assigned to these record groups and for each of them a brief description indicating their general character, chronological scope, and quantity and also the nature of the activities and functions of the agency that created them is available. For many record groups or parts of record groups preliminary inventories or checklists—which describe the material series by series—have been compiled, and it is expected that ultimately an indexed inventory of each record group will be available. Special reports or lists descriptive of material available for given subjects, regions, or periods—somewhat comparable to subject bibliographies—are also compiled, as, for example, the thirty reference information circulars that have been prepared

to inform government officials of materials in the National Archives on specific topics—materials that might be of use to them in connection with the prosecution of the war or with planning for the post-war period.

The task of bringing under control the permanently valuable noncurrent records accumulated by agencies of the federal government during more than a century and a half is far from being complete; in fact we have only scratched the surface as yet, but it is not an impossible task. Nor will the task of dealing similarly with the even greater quantities of valuable records that have recently or will in the future become noncurrent be an impossible one. It will cost money, of course, to bring these records under control, but not so much as can be saved by the effective management and prompt retirement of all records throughout the government. In fact, recent programs in a few agencies of the government have indicated that, by preventing the meaningless proliferation of files, with six carbon copies of each letter, and by the disposal of routine records promptly after they have outlived their usefulness, large sums can be saved that would otherwise be spent for floor space and filing equipment and for the salaries of innumerable dead-file clerks to attend the unburied remains. Moreover, the resultant body of records that comes to the National Archives when records administration is effectively applied in the agency is less expensive to store, to bring under control, and to render service on than is a mass of unselected and badly organized records.

Time does not permit me to tell you of the progress that has been made and is being made in the field of archives administration outside the federal government. In our states, our large cities, and even in many of our great corporations, as well as in the federal government, rapid progress has been made in the last ten years toward the ideal of recording, preserving, and making available to all who have occasion to use it that part of man's experience that may be valuable to him or to his successor. It is not too much to say that the time may come when anyone who has good reason for doing so may have opportunity to "look at the record."

Solon J. Buck

The National Archives

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE FLATTENING OF FOLDED RECORDS[1]

THE modern archivist's real problems in the use and handling of loose paper records are not primarily concerned with the relatively few documents of early periods that have survived the vicissitudes of war, fire, or wanton destruction. These papers, for the most part, have considerable intrinsic or sentimental value as individual items and have accordingly been carefully stored and cherished through the years. The flattening of this type of material, if it presents a problem at all, is comparatively unimportant and is usually closely associated with the problem of rehabilitation. The archivist's chief concern in the physical handling of loose paper records, therefore, is more properly directed towards the vast accumulations created in the nineteenth century.

Prior to and during the early years of that century, all writing or record papers commonly used in America and Europe were expensive hand-made sheets of one hundred per cent rag fiber. The rags, after a minimum of washing and cooking, were converted into a reasonably pure and stable form of cellulose fiber that did not require excessive chemical bleaching, mineral filling, or rosin sizing to produce acceptable paper; and, although the qualities of papers were not well standardized but varied considerably from time to time and with different mills in different localities, the product was generally good. The productivity of the labor engaged in the paper industry was extremely low, however, as gauged by modern standards, and as a result paper was a relatively expensive luxury. When the Fourdrinier paper-making machine was introduced into America in 1827, the potential output of the labor engaged in paper manufacture was enormously increased, and in a very short time the market was flooded with quantities of low-priced paper. The public avidly sought the cheaper product and quickly became aware of the many conveniences of its everyday use in the business world. As a result, the demand for paper soon exceeded the quantity that could be made with the supply of rags available, and the manufacturers were forced to substitute other fibers, usually inferior in strength and purity, in

[1] A revised form of a paper read before the Open Conference on Administration of the staff of the National Archives, October 23, 1944.

order to stabilize prices and to stretch the rag supply to meet the demands of an ever-expanding paper market.

Straw, wood pulps, and other fibers of no commercial value today were frequently used as adulerants in the rag papers or were used alone in the very cheap papers. The need for and the means of purifying these fibers for paper-making were not well understood and the papers were made with most of the naturally occurring acids and lignins intact. The presence of these foreign substances has been largely responsible for the obviously poor quality and the accelerated deterioration of some of the papers dating from the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The results of this evolution or industrialization of the paper-making industry can be made apparent in a cursory sampling of almost any archival series extending throughout the century. Papers of the early period will be relatively few, and, although they may exhibit signs of weakness at the folds and some discoloration, they will be fairly substantial in general and will be strong enough for safe and easy handling. Papers of the later period, especially after 1869 when ground woodpulp was introduced, will be found proportionately more numerous than those of the early period and will be not only weak or broken at the folds but, in many cases, will be brittle throughout. Many papers of this later period particularly have been considered of relatively little value and have often been improperly housed and carelessly used so that their natural deterioration has been accelerated rather than minimized by the storage conditions.

It is, therefore, the nineteenth century records worthy of preservation that now require the major portion of the archivist's thought insofar as physical handling is concerned. During the earlier period when files were less bulky and labor was less expensive, it was frequently customary to assemble periodically groups of related papers and have them bound into volumes of uniform size. In some instances, the individual documents were mounted on the pages of blank books, and such material that was currently bound in some way is generally found in good condition although the bindings may be in need of repair. As time went on, it was found that the bulk of accumulating files was increasing at a tremendous rate, and the adoption of some quicker, less expensive method of filing loose papers became of the utmost importance. The scheme of folding

records individually or in bundles, labeling them on the outside, and filing them on edge in Woodruff files or similar containers offered many apparent advantages and was widely accepted, especially by the larger record-creating agencies, both private and public.

This type of filing was completely satisfactory from several viewpoints. The documents pertinent to one subject were folded and kept together conveniently; an over-size sheet presented no special packing and indexing problem since it was folded to standard size and was filed in its proper sequence in the series; and, probably most attractive of all, servicing was easily and quickly accomplished without the need of extraneous and space-consuming materials such as folders and guide cards. What those who introduced the Woodruff files evidently did not foresee was the inevitable physical damage to the paper that would be incurred by the periodic unfolding and refolding of the records as they were used. Because of the natural aging of an initially poor paper, the exposure of the paper to relatively high concentrations of sulphur dioxide evolved by the gas burners and coal heaters of the day, and the lack of properly humidified air, the papers gradually dried out, deteriorated, and became brittle. Breakage along the fold lines became inevitable but was more commonly encountered among the sharply folded records containing few enclosures than among those with softly rounded folds. The general weakening and fracture among the folded files finally became obvious and this method of filing was gradually abandoned so that by the beginning of the twentieth century the flat-filing of loose papers had been almost universally adopted as standard practice. The older files, however, were kept for the most part in their original containers and those that were relatively early and inactive are still today in fairly good condition, but many of those that were on poor grades of paper and were also improperly housed and actively used have become so torn and broken that their effective servicing today is seriously hampered.

It consequently seems apparent that the eventual flattening of all folded records of permanent value that are frequently consulted must be accepted as a prerequisite to their proper preservation regardless of the inconveniences in the use and storage of the material. When storage conditions favorable to paper preservation (50 per cent relative humidity and 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit) can be maintained, however, the flattening of large volumes of relatively

inactive records may be safely postponed almost indefinitely. Priorities on flattening should certainly be given to those groups already exhibiting evidence of physical deterioration and to very active records that are receiving unreasonable wear from their day to day use.

The actual mechanical process of flattening the average records series is much simpler and less time-consuming than is the preparation of this same series for flattening, and the refiling, in whatever containers selected, after flattening. The rate of flattening a particular group of records should be tempered to the speed at which the finished material can be conveniently assimilated by those refiling the records. Whenever oversize material must be filed separately and cross-indexed, or papers kept together with enclosures either by stapling or filing in a suitably labeled envelop or folder, or individual documents removed, repaired, and reinserted, the speed of the whole flattening process will be considerably retarded. For the sake of over-all efficiency in the conversion of a series of records from a folded file to a flat file, it is advisable to limit strictly the facilities and labor employed for routine flattening and to spread the flattening program over a considerable period of time rather than to allow large quantities of material to be in process or to remain unfiled for any length of time.

A careful study of the physical condition and the degree of use of the various series of folded records should be the basis for determining flattening needs and priorities, although first consideration should generally be given to the most actively used materials. The older and perhaps more valuable or more fragile records may be handled little by little as time becomes available. Opportunity should be allowed for the careful repair of records whenever necessary and for refiling immediately after processing in their permanent containers with all the needed labels and cross-references.

Certain techniques have been developed at the National Archives during recent years for the expeditious flattening of the various types of records encountered in bodies of archives. The specific method selected in each case depends primarily upon the nature and condition of the material, but the great majority of records may be most effectively and inexpensively flattened by ironing. All papers must first be opened and smoothed out by hand. Rubber bands and any unnecessary pins and clips are removed in order to avoid stains on

the papers that may result from these fasteners as they deteriorate or rust. During this part of the processing, which may be quite time-consuming if the percentage of broken sheets or sheets of tissue weight is high, each document with its attachments or enclosures is kept separate from adjacent sheets in the file by the use of a strip of colored paper acting as a divider. When the unfolding of a group of records, such as the contents of one drawer or Woodruff file has been completed, the whole pile is placed on a tray in a room maintained at about ninety-five per cent relative humidity. The papers are fanned out somewhat to provide reasonable exposure of each sheet to the damp air and are left in this atmosphere for several hours. Any prolonged exposure to this high humidity must be avoided because of the danger of inducing mold-growth or blurring the water-soluble inks. Two or three hours of moisture absorption can do no harm, however, and are adequate for the purpose. At the end of this period the papers are gathered together to preserve the moisture absorbed, are removed from the damp air, are assembled in small piles, and are ironed immediately in these groups. This method of ironing dries and flattens most records effectively, but if the papers are very fragile or thin it will be necessary to iron each individually. Ordinary electrically-heated hand irons are the most easily handled and the most adaptable ironing equipment for this type of work. A firm but not hard ironing surface, such as a pile of blotters should be used. The hand iron is far less expensive in both first cost and maintenance than the mangle formerly used in the National Archives for the purpose, its use requires no special skill or instruction, and the sheets ironed are flat rather than curved. Mangles, however, are of definite value for flattening large maps, especially those on tracing cloth where even pressure over a wide surface is advantageous. After ironing, the material that does not need repair is ready for packing and shelving.

It frequently happens that a series of records being flattened will be of apparently uniform size and in good condition when folded, but that documents of miscellaneous sizes and in varying states of preservation will be found when the series is unfolded. It must then be determined, for each records series, whether it is better to cut and hinge the larger sheets to fit the container proposed for housing the material, to refold the documents to some extent, or to cross-index and to file them in a larger container away from the general

series. The policy adopted will depend upon the physical condition of the oversize pieces, their numerical proportion to the whole collection, and the manner in which the records are used. If the paper is in good condition there should be little harm in refolding some sheets for convenience, although it is never advisable to fold papers in more than one direction, as folded corners are extremely vulnerable to wear. If the papers are weak or already broken along the original folds, it is better to repair them at the time of flattening either by hinging along the original breaks or cutting and hinging otherwise as the document or the container indicates. From a records preservation standpoint only, it is of course advisable to pack all such oversize material flat in large containers without folding or hinging, but the convenience in having all pertinent documents together in one container certainly deserves some concessions, and it is not believed that intelligent folding or hinging will cause real injury to the papers so treated.

Documents of average size that are broken or fragile are repaired in the manner best suited to each case and reinserted in the file so that each paper in the collection will be in good usable condition and in its proper place after flattening and repacking.

The amount of repair required in each series naturally varies widely; each sheet in some series must be repaired, whereas in other groups but one sheet in a hundred may need special treatment. The time required to flatten and refile any particular collection is almost wholly dependent upon the condition of the paper and the amount of repair undertaken. The actual humidifying and ironing processes with which flattening is primarily associated are relatively simple and by far the least time-consuming of the whole series of operations required in converting records from a folded file to a flat file. It is therefore impossible to determine flattening rates in advance or to estimate costs or man-hour production on such a process if the flattening of records is to be construed in this larger sense. It may be said, however, that one man working continuously with one iron on an average group of records in good condition can flatten what five are required to unfold and put away, and as a group they should average about ten thousand sheets a day.

There are several methods of flattening papers other than ironing that may be advantageously adopted in certain cases. Extremely fragile items such as brittle tracing papers, documents that have been washed or bleached to remove stains, fragments of mildewed, water-

soaked, or burned documents, and parchments, which do not tolerate ironing, may be more safely handled by spreading out each dampened sheet between blotters and pressing, without heat, until dry. The method is of course very expensive in labor and time and is used only as a last resort in those special cases where ironing would be difficult or injurious to the records.

At the other extreme of flattening costs, large groups of material in good condition may oftentimes be flattened sufficiently for satisfactory storage merely by opening the sheets and packing them flat under the natural pressure maintained in records containers without either humidification or ironing. This method can hardly be effectively carried out, however, unless the air in the records-storage areas and the work rooms is reasonably moist. The fifty per cent relative humidity maintained in the National Archives for the sake of the prevention of the embrittlement of the papers has been found adequate for this type of flattening, and good papers conditioned from long storage in this atmosphere may be opened and pressed out without danger of breakage.

It should be apparent that the mechanical aspects of flattening are fundamentally very simple and its execution requires little equipment or technical training to produce satisfactory results. The real problem of flattening records, then, lies not in the process itself but in the preparation of the material for processing and the repacking of the records afterwards for most convenient use. These parts of the operation require considerable time, intelligence, and skill, and any design for the eventual flattening of all records in an institution should be modest enough to provide ample opportunity for the refiling, in the most useful and acceptable manner, of all records to be treated. Fortunately for the success of such a program, modern records are not being folded and the quantity of documents to be flattened is not increasing but gradually declining as folded material can be treated. The eventual flattening of all permanent records is eminently desirable as a factor in their preservation, but it is not a work that should be hastily undertaken. The flattening program for any establishment housing large quantities of folded records should be carefully planned on a priority basis and then carried out in such a manner that at no time will any sizable quantity of records be out of records containers and unavailable for use.

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THE TERRITORIAL PAPERS OF THE UNITED STATES[1]

THE generous allotment of space afforded in the program of the Society of American Archivists for a consideration of the problem of the publication of archives is an auspicious event. For more than half a century plans for the systematic reproduction of historical records pertaining to the growth of state and nation, along lines of modern editorial techniques, have been agitated, explored, and supported with varying degrees of success. This present recognition of the importance of the general subject is consequently more than encouraging; and the hope is expressed that this Society will contribute the weight of its growing influence in the propagation of the faith.

The task of converting public officials and legislative bodies, and trustees of private collections of manuscripts, to the need of adopting a program of systematic publication and of providing the means therefor has been very slow in this country. The plain truth is that the growth of a consistent policy has not kept pace with other aspects of our state and national development. Some progress, it must be acknowledged, has been achieved; and, perhaps, in the light of the facts that we are a very young nation, comparatively speaking, and that we have been afflicted every quarter of a century on the average by a war and perturbed all too frequently by political schism, it is possible to suggest that progress has been commendable.

As is well-known, but worth repeating for the record, documentary publication, insofar as it has evolved in the United States, has been effected along three different lines: by the separate states in the reproduction of their official records or the manuscripts in the keeping of their historical societies; by the United States in the publication of specific types of official federal documents; and by private enterprise in the presentation of the writings of an individual or of a corporation. At the same time we distinguish two sources of subsidy, namely, grants of public funds and private subvention.

Documentary historical publication has also followed one of three alternate plans in accordance with the character of the papers involved, the extent of funds available, and the purpose to be served.

[1] A paper read at the eighth annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, November 9, 1944.

The plan of printing an entire collection regardless of its contents represents a common practice, notably in the case of the papers of an individual. The program for the publication of the manuscripts of Thomas Jefferson, so ably presented on the present occasion by Dr. Boyd, is one example. Again, a period or an area, or a combination of both, has often been treated by reproducing every pertinent item from all available sources, wherever found. Instances of this type are found in some of the volumes of the *Illinois Historical Collections*, the *Indiana Historical Collections*, and the *New York Historical Society Collections*. A third alternative is what may be called the selective type, involving a choice of materials on a particular topic or phase of history, illustrated by the subject of this paper—*The Territorial Papers of the United States*.

The publication in question occupies a unique position in our American scheme of documentary historical publication. As already suggested, the publication of archives in the United States has been on the whole sporadic and piecemeal, no comprehensive edition of the archives of the nation comparable to the Rolls Series of Great Britain or the Monumenta of Germany having ever been undertaken and carried through to a conclusion. Yet since the days of the American Revolution such an enterprise has been envisioned by numerous persons, and in some instances actually commenced. There was the unfulfilled dream of Ebenezer Hazard in 1778, whose plan actually received the support of the Continental Congress. There was the uncompleted *State Papers* series by Thomas B. Wait, which belongs to the decade following the War of 1812. There was the abortive effort of Peter Force to complete his well-known *American Archives* during the middle period. And in the same golden age of American historiography there was the uncompleted *American State Papers*. The last mentioned monumental work, compiled by Gales and Seaton, was the nearest to the ideal of a comprehensive publication of the federal archives that has ever been projected. The thirty-eight folio volumes of that stately series remain after more than a century the only comprehensive printed source of information respecting the history of the United States from 1789 to 1832, and the value of that source is further enhanced by the fact that many of the originals on which the work was based have disappeared.

So important a beginning was made and so all inclusive was the

plan conceived by the compilers of the *American State Papers* series that as late as 1908 a committee of American historians, whose names demand the highest respect, recommended to the President and to the Congress of the United States that the enterprise which had been abandoned in 1861 be renewed. The report and recommendations of 1908 represent the most recent phase of the hope long held for an American Monumenta; but its recommendations were never acted upon. And so it was that the American Historical Association, through its committee on documentary historical publication, felt that until a better opportunity arose for the promotion of the larger object, it was the better expedient to encourage specific works of merit already under way and to seek means for the commencement of others. Consequently, the association strongly supported such documentary publications of the Department of State as the important *Foreign Relations* volumes and Hunter Miller's monumental edition of *Treaties and Other International Acts of the United States,* and, with the co-operation of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association and the state historical societies, sponsored the publication which is the subject of this paper.

In 1911 the Carnegie Institution of Washington published *A Calendar of Papers in Washington Archives relating to the Territories of the United States to 1873* compiled by Dr. David W. Parker. It was the first calendar of its kind that had appeared. Here, then, was something tangible which could be utilized as a basis and as an argument for the enactment of a law authorizing the publication of a particular series of historical documents, earmarked for the first time, which would furnish for scholars, teachers, and publicists materials enabling them to understand the evolution of the Union. The territories of the United States bore a relation to the federal government analogous in many respects to the relations of the American colonies to the British government. Consequently, the bulk of the official records pertaining to our territories was in the federal archives. The states that were once colonies of Great Britain had, of course, published their own colonial records, but the documents which disclosed the evolution of the American territories, involving a territorial, or colonial, policy on the part of the United States as well as the internal history of the individual territories, were on the whole a closed book and would remain so unless a program for their publication in some systematic order should be undertaken.

And so it turned out that in 1925 a law authorizing the compilation of the records in question by the Department of State was enacted, in which, be it noted, reference was made to Parker's *Calendar*. Under this act the initial work of collecting was commenced by Dr. Newton D. Mereness. But the law in question had not provided for the publication of the papers, and in 1929, through the joint efforts of the various historical associations and societies, a new law was enacted which included a provision for publication.

Having briefly disposed of the origin of the project and its place in American historiography, I turn to the principal theme of the discussion—an elucidation of the *modus operandi*. When work was begun in 1931 under the law of 1929 it was plain that the undertaking presented a much more complex problem than is usually encountered in editorial undertakings. It was evidently not possible to proceed with the publication *in extenso* of all pertinent documents. Both the quantity and the character of the materials were such as to preclude an exhaustive publication with the limited funds for that purpose at the disposal of the Department of State. To be sure, if, at the outset, there had been an assurance of continuing appropriations until the work was completed a different procedure might well have been adopted. Such a promise was not then in sight, however, and it was therefore necessary to devise some plan of selection which would be other than an indiscriminate one. A scheme must be adopted that would not only be economical, but also one that would meet the substantial needs of the professional public.

The adoption of an inflexible formula in defining the boundaries within which materials should be included or excluded from the edition was deemed unwise in view of the fact that the character of the documents varied considerably with respect to different territories. The preliminary survey had indicated that for some territories certain categories of documents were not only incomplete, but in some instances were almost entirely absent, while for others the same categories were approximately complete. Moreover, from territory to territory the problems encountered by settlers and by territorial officials, as reflected in the documents, differed sufficiently to warrant a shifting of emphasis as regards the materials that should be chosen for publication.

In order, therefore, to maintain a fairly equitable balance between the various volumes and to preserve at least a semblance of uni-

formity, and also to present what seemed to be the most useful collection, a number of controls were devised at the commencement of the work so that little would be left to chance or to editorial caprice.

The first and most tenacious of these controls has already been alluded to (it cannot be overemphasized), namely, a fiscal one. In this regard the editor has to remind himself continuously to exercise economy of space and time in order not to exceed what can be paid for, and at the same time to provide a work that will not need to be redone in the forseeable future. This situation prescribes other controls.

The necessity was evident of limiting the edition in the main to materials found within the boundaries of the District of Columbia. There are, to be sure, relevant papers in every state that was once a territory, notably such records as those of the territorial supreme court and the journals of the territorial council and of the house of representatives; but these records never formed a part of the federal archives and are consequently not deemed a part of our task to publish. Copies of the territorial laws, however, did reach the office of the Secretary of State for regular submission to Congress and are found in varying quantities in the archives of the Department of State; they are therefore federal records. But since the laws in question have been previously printed by the various states we are relieved of that problem.

On the other hand, the original of the journal of the proceedings of the territorial governor, kept by the secretary, is also usually, though not always, found in the state archives. In accordance with federal law a certified transcript of this journal was dispatched every six months to the Secretary of State and under normal circumstances it should be found in the Department of State. It is not always present, and there are instances in which this most important record, which embodies lists of appointments, militia orders, and proclamations, cannot be found in any form. It is, however, a distinctly federal document and is held subject to publication wherever it may be discovered, if not already in print. In other words, a distinction is drawn between records that may be characterized as purely federal, to the extent that they stemmed from some act or instruction of the central government, and those which originated within the territory and which subsequently became a part of the state archives. The

general rule against seeking materials beyond the confines of the national capital is further modified when the following situation arises. An original letter signed and sent to a territorial official and preserved only in office copy form in Washington, is sometimes discovered in the archives of a state or in the collection of some historical society. It has been deemed essential to print from such an original, and conversely to reproduce from similar repositories copies of official letters of importance originally dispatched by territorial officials to Washington and now missing from the files. In general, however, the number of such items that have been chosen for publication are comparatively small.

Another canon of admissibility concerns those documents which have been subjected to previous publication under various auspices. The general rule is to exclude such published records, but again there are exceptions (as in law there is no rule without its exceptions), for example, the following highly relevant documents marred by defective printing, or which have appeared in editions no longer easily accessible are viewed as subject to republication. And a paper considered as essential to the completion of a series or to which frequent allusion is made in other documents included in a given volume, is reprinted without hesitation, even though it may have previously appeared in good and available form. Yet the sum of the papers republished in *The Territorial Papers* volumes is inconsequential. In a typical volume containing approximately eight hundred documents the number that have heretofore appeared in any printed form does not exceed a dozen or fifteen. In this connection, also, an effort is made to cite in footnotes on appropriate pages all printed sources with as much descriptive information as the need calls for and space permits.

Coming now to the heart of the problem, it was determined that the administration of the territory should be made the principal basis on which to predicate the contents of the series. Priority is, then, accorded to such papers as possess a relevancy to administration, a rule deemed tenable because the territory was plainly an administrative problem. Records relating to the management of the territories consequently become the central core of the work, and nearly every document selected for publication falls, directly or indirectly, within the framework of this principle. Furthermore, certain categories of papers which fit this description are afforded space for complete pub-

lication, with, of course, certain exception. Until 1873 the administration of the territories was in the general charge of the Department of State, and the department's files therefore contain a good many relevant documents, such as letters passing between the Secretary of State and the governors, though in some instances there are gaps which will probably never be filled. In any event, the aim is to reproduce all pertinent papers discovered in the files of the Department of State, exclusive of those previously printed in good and available form. Throughout this operation still another rule is applied which further modifies the complete publication principle to the extent that a document which is purely cumulative in content and therefore supplying no additional information, may be rejected. In the selection of papers from other categories this same restraint also applies. But whenever such a document is omitted it is appropriately cited.

The rule of approximate completeness prescribed for one class of official papers is similarly extended to two other groups of documents. The letterbooks of the Postmaster General contain a broken and incomplete set of copies of letters sent pertaining to the establishment and operation of the postal system in each territory; the extension into the frontier of a means for the transmission of intelligence is so significant that no effort has been spared to cull and reproduce every pertinent source of this character. Again, memorials and petitions to Congress from the people and from the territorial legislature praying for changes in government and for other purposes, found principally in the files of the United States Senate and House of Representatives, are all included excepting the comparatively few that have been printed in other publications and excepting identical texts. But in the latter instance the names of all signers of duplicate petitions are reproduced. Scholars may therefore feel fairly assured that with regard to the three classes of documents thus described the coverage has been reasonably complete.

A higher degree of selection becomes inevitable, however, with respect to other groups of materials, and the choices are determined by the same criterion as in the instances noted above, namely, they are controlled through judging their relations to some phase of the administration of the territory. Since omniscience is hardly to be expected of any editor in such a situation, it is not unreasonable to assume that his judgment may occasionally be deflected when con-

fronted, as the series proceeds, by a growing multiplicity and variety of documents.

Viewed as coming directly under the general rule of inclusion are records pertaining to the adjudication of land titles and to the administration, survey, and sale of public lands after the extinguishment of Indian titles. The principal sources are in the General Land Office, now in the Department of the Interior, and in certain files in the Department of the Treasury. The papers are abundant; the hiatuses are few. Incoming and outgoing letters, together with the many other types of documents associated with the land business are too numerous for anything approaching complete publication. It is clear, of course, that volumes of the proportions designed, which must also embody other essential classes of materials, cannot supply the complete story of the land problem. Consequently, for each territory only such documents are elected for reproduction as are sufficient to enable the reader to sense the general pattern in the unfolding of the land issue, including the evolution of a land policy. Fortunately a good many land papers have been published in other works, and the selection of documents is with a view of supplementing those already in print. It is believed that the citations of both published and omitted papers will light the way for the student of the land question. The indexes and footnotes are designed in that connection to be of immediate service in facilitating the use of the documents, whether printed or unprinted, bearing on the issue in question. This land question occupied more of the attention of the officers and people of the territories than any other set of events, unless it was the problem of Indian relations, the papers of which pose a still more delicate and difficult procedure concerning selection.

Users of *The Territorial Papers* volumes published to date are aware that less relative emphasis has been placed upon papers illustrating Indian affairs than those which pertain to other aspects of territorial history. The principal explanation for this lesser relative emphasis is that Indian affairs transcended territorial boundaries; an Indian problem would have existed and there would have been documents relating to it if no territorial organizations had ever been established. Moreover, materials concerning the subject in question, as found in the archives of the Department of War and in the Office of Indian Affairs, in the Department of the Interior, are so enormous in quantity that a separate and different type of publication would be

required to provide an adequate documentary collection. Whatever records in this category are considered for publication are therefore subjected to careful scrutiny in order to exclude entirely any element of caprice in the execution of the task.

In this regard the defense of the territory, with which both the central and the territorial governments were vitally concerned, has been judged to possess a relationship to administration, at least in some of its ramifications. Furthermore, the territorial governor was also superintendent of those Indians who lived within his jurisdiction, and his two functions, as governor and as Indian superintendent, often became identified as one: events within one branch of his service frequently pertaining also to the other. The governor's militia powers as commander in chief of the territorial militia were plainly a part of his executive prerogative, and papers relating thereto in connection with the protection of the territory from Indian attacks must be viewed as relevant and they therefore fall within the rule of inclusion. The governor was also in nominal control of Indian agencies, and although the men who officered them were appointed from Washington, they reported to the governor as well as to their superiors in the federal government; and they were subject to the governor's instructions under certain conditions.

The governor was likewise drawn into close relations with the officials of other extraterritorial establishments, either through joint instructions to all territorial, Indian, and military officials, or by reason of the necessity of co-operation between himself and the heads of the various establishments mentioned. For example, there existed in each territory federal military posts under the direct administration of the Secretary of War, and there was frequent occasion for consultation by the governor not only with the Secretary of War but also with the commanders of the various posts and with the Indian agents on the problem of territorial defense. The creation from time to time of new Indian agencies and military posts was, moreover, a forecast of the beginning of white settlements over which the territory would have jurisdiction. This extension of settlement made it necessary to acquire title to Indian lands, in which respect the governor was usually either the negotiator or joint-negotiator; in any event papers which concern the acquirement of title to Indian lands possess an immediate interest. And it is this class of documents with which those relating to the public land system tend to dovetail. Although the

administration of the factory trading system, so long as it existed, was distinctly extraterritorial, the offices of factor and Indian agent were sometimes united, and at all times the factories, located at strategic points in the territory, were tangent at certain points with the political phases of Indian affairs.

It should be obvious that in the application of the procedures thus described, comparatively little has been left for random selection save for the fact that as between two equally relevant documents, where there is space but for one, the element of personal judgment is involved in the choice. It will be perceived also that the task in this first procedural stage differs widely from those which deal exclusively with the papers of a single individual.

With respect to other editorial techniques there are of course no choices: an editor is subject to universally accepted standards. In 1857 the British government authorized the publication of a series of volumes to be known as "Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland from the Invasion of the Romans to the Reign of Henry VIII," and at the same time the Master of the Rolls laid down certain principles for the guidance of the editors of the undertaking thus initiated. The most significant of the rules enunciated related to the care with which the records selected for publication were to be prepared: the documents were to be carefully collated with the original manuscripts, and with the best of the latter when several versions of a single document were present; and finally each document was to be prefaced by an account of the original manuscript, or manuscripts, utilized, together with an explanation of whatever chronological difficulties may have been encountered.

Thus was commenced the Rolls Series, which in time became the great example of meticulous and wise editing. It was not, of course, the earliest modern pattern, but it is cited in the present instance because of the clarity with which the mechanics of the task were prescribed. The basic principles of modern historical editing first introduced into Europe were not widely accepted in the United States, however, until well toward the end of the last century. Some twenty-seven years ago the late Dr. Worthington C. Ford, in speaking of historical editing of his generation, asserted: "To furnish the material in its full and unaltered shape—that is the achievement that has come to editorial methods in a generation."

In the present connection, the establishment of authentic textual

versions and the final procurement of an accurate typescript for the printer not infrequently present challenging problems which necessarily evoke the use of all the established canons of textual criticism. The general run of documents chosen for publication consist of autograph letters signed, letters signed, autograph documents signed (commissions, proclamations, orders, journals, petitions), documents signed, and, in the absence of such originals, drafts, office copies (letter books), copies signed, and copies of copies. It is usually not difficult to establish the genuineness of an autograph letter, for which there are several tests: calligraphy, authenticity of the signature, the name of the addressee on the cover, postmarks, if any, the author's knowledge of the subject matter discussed, endorsements, and the acknowledgment, if discovered. The principal harassment is the procurement of accurate typescripts of many of these originals due to the not infrequent illegibility of the handwriting. There are cases in which the editor and his assistants return repeatedly to the original, even after the type has been set, before a satisfactory reading has been established.

In the determination of the best copy to be selected there is rarely any choice, since most of the copies used are office copies found in letter books. Such copies often embody obvious clerical errors, but since they are the official records the only resort is to call attention in footnotes to the presence of specific errors. In the instance of a copy of a copy, however, it has not been deemed of any advantage to perpetuate for all time copyist's mistakes, such as the transposition of letters of words, which are clearly slips of the pen. In making this statement, it must be understood that textual emendation is not permitted in any other sense and is never undertaken in the case of an original or of an official copy. Occasionally there are found two or three variants of the same copy, in which event a number of considerations are taken into account. If one of the copies contains the authentic signature of the author of the original it is generally preferred. Otherwise the circumstances, if they can be ascertained, under which each copy was made are considered, as well as such elements as handwriting, type of paper used, chronology, *et cetera*. Differences in textual matter as between the different variants of the same document are duly noted in footnotes.

An unusually good example of the problem of establishing an authentic text is found in President Washington's famous letter to

Gov. Arthur St. Clair, of the Northwest Territory, of March 28, 1792, in reply to one from St. Clair dated two days previously which contained the latter's resignation as major general as a result of his defeat by the Indians on November 4, 1791. A draft of Washington's letter to St. Clair is found in the archives of the Department of State. Although this draft is in Washington's hand, collateral evidence disclosed that Secretary of War Knox and Secretary of State Jefferson had assisted in its composition and that St. Clair, then at the seat of government in Philadelphia, saw the letter in draft form. The text also reveals that it was the President's aim to cushion as far as possible St. Clair's fall as a military commander. But the draft contains a paragraph, following the signature, marked "Private" which accepts St. Clair's resignation and extends the good wishes of the President. This draft, including the postscript, was published by William H. Smith in his edition of *The St. Clair Papers*. But where was the original letter signed which went to St. Clair? The reading of other relevant correspondence led to the wish to locate that letter if possible; it was found in the Huntington Library. Much to our astonishment this original did not contain the postscript described as belonging to the signed draft found in the State Department, and which had received previous publication. Needless to say the original letter received by St. Clair was selected for our publication, with a footnote description of the draft and an account of its evolution. But no explanation of the discrepancy between the two versions of the letter is attempted, which suggests the further statement that throughout the work editorial interpretations of the text are rigidly excluded.

Then there is the occasional task of reconstructing the text of a document. A case in point is that of the executive register of the territory of Illinois which embodies the texts of commissions, proclamations, militia orders, and lists of appointments of civil officials and militia officers made from time to time by the governor. There are three manuscript versions of this document and one printed text. The first manuscript consists of the original notes of the territorial secretary which had been made from day to day. The second version is what may be called the finished product; it is a copy of the first, but is constructed along the usual formal lines of a journal and had been designed as the permanent record. The third manuscript text is an authenticated copy, based on the second version; it is in the archives

of the Department of State. But not all the installments of this copy of the register are now present. In 1901 the Illinois Historical Library published the register, basing its text upon the second manuscript. A check revealed that this printed text embodied so many errors both of commission and omission that it was deemed necessary to republish it in the volume on the territory of Illinois, now partially in proof.

A further comparison disclosed not only that the second manuscript text, that is, the formal record, was itself incomplete, but that it contained entries not found in the original draft. The State Department version, insofar as it is now available, conformed generally to the second text, while the printed one differed from all. Consequently it was determined to consolidate within the textual version recently prepared for publication, and now in type, all the data which the copyists failed to transfer into the formal record and to indicate in footnotes the various discrepancies discovered in the different versions. It may be added that this is not a new or unique experience in the execution of this work.

Since the commencement of the present management of the project in 1931 the distribution of the archival materials on which it is based has undergone an important metamorphosis. At the outset it was necessary to carry on researches in the archives of the Departments of State, Treasury, War, Interior, and Post Office, in the Senate Library, the Library of Congress, and the General Accounting Office, all rather widely scattered. But with the organization of the National Archives in 1934 there has been a fairly rapid removal of the papers to that great central repository, where they have been cleaned, repaired, and classified. At the present time the archives of State, Treasury, War, and Interior Departments, and the Senate files have been transferred. The Post Office Department has thus far retained its records, as has the General Accounting Office. And the papers of the House of Representatives are now all in the Library of Congress, as are the presidential papers and those of certain other public men who were concerned in various ways with the territories.

Such a transformation has greatly facilitated our work. Inevitably as the various removals have occurred and as some categories of papers have been reclassified, certain forms of citations have had to be changed. On the whole, however, this involves no great difficulty, either to the editor or to the scholar who makes use of the volumes.

The helpful assistance of trained archivists is now at the disposal of the editor at all times, which is of incalculable value.

The one great need yet to be supplied is the preparation by the National Archives of calendars, inventories, and other finding lists. For the present administration of *The Territorial Papers* volumes this need is perhaps not so demanding as it will be for a succeeding one since we are already familiar with the location and character of the sources, having learned the lesson the hard way. Consequently the hope is expressed that the time will not be far distant when the publication of both general and detailed inventories will be undertaken. It is understood that such a project is a part of the program of the National Archives staff and that it will be commenced as soon as the necessary funds may be obtained.

CLARENCE E. CARTER

Department of State

LOCAL ARCHIVES[1]

PUBLIC archives may possibly be divided into four general subdivisions: local, state, national, and international. We shall limit this paper to only three classifications of local records: vital, land, and tax records.

As archivists, keepers, organizers, and protectors of public records and documents which are to be preserved as evidence of fact, you are necessarily vitally concerned with the painstaking care and industry required of local officials who make and assemble these records.

While much of this discussion applies directly to Connecticut, one of the older states, an inspection of the laws of several states indicates very similar procedure. The earliest Connecticut law requiring recording of births and marriages was passed by the General Court in 1644, and the code of 1650 included the recording of deaths by the town clerks.

The technique of recording births, marriages, and deaths has been more or less standardized. Forms prepared and supplied by the several state departments of health are completed by licensed physicians or midwives, but when neither of these is available, parents or near relatives may file the necessary data. Marriages are reported by ministers, priests, or justices of the peace, in the town, county, or subdivision where the marriage is performed.

In our state, registrars are supplied with proper forms by the state director of vital statistics. Recording and indexing instructions; the use of approved papers, binders, inks, and typewriter ribbons; and the installation and use of fire-proof vaults, are all under the jurisdiction of the examiner of public records, who is available at all times for consultation concerning administrative and equipment problems.

Whenever new laws are passed which change the principle of recording and care, registrars are called together and the new procedure is thoroughly discussed and agreed upon.

Many states now have laws which provide a method for recording belated birth certificates, allowing the substitution of secondary evidence in the place of information ordinarily given by doctors, midwives, or parents. Where secondary information is submitted, more

[1] A paper read at the eighth annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, November 9, 1944.

than two corresponding records are required, and they may be obtained from church records, family bibles, school registers, census records, diaries, printed genealogies, or insurance applications, which were dated at least fifteen years prior to the request for the recording of the birth record. It is also possible to secure affidavits from two or more persons who have known the applicant for a long period of time, beginning in childhood.

Realizing the importance of birth records for the purposes of social security, old age pensions, and, in war-time, the obtaining of positions in industry, registrars often expend considerably energy and time in helping an individual obtain the necessary documents to prove his birth and entitle him to an official record.

The following case recently came to my personal attention in Hartford. A man whom we shall call Mr. Allen, born supposedly in 1898, a carpenter by trade, was urgently needed in a factory which was manufacturing gliders. According to the rules and regulations, his birth certificate was required before he could be employed. Mr. Allen belongs to a very old Hartford family, but when he applied at the official record office for a copy of his birth record he was much surprised and disturbed to learn that it was not on file. The physician who was supposed to have attended his birth had passed on. The church record, which should have properly recorded his baptism gave only his name, and disclosed neither his father's nor his mother's name, nor his birth date. The registrar learned that Mr. Allen was born in the home of his grandparents in Hartford, and that his father died soon after his birth. When the boy was three years old his mother died. After this the grandparents applied to the probate court for guardianship papers. These court papers showed that the grandparents had adopted a minor child, without giving the child's name or age. When the boy was sent to school, the registration card stated his age, but no place of birth; in place of the parents' names, the names of the grandparents were recorded. It was learned that Mr. Allen was married in Brewster, New York, in 1910. That marriage record indicated his age and named his birthplace as Hartford, Connecticut, but no parents' names were given. Unfortunately he had bought no life insurance that would help to clarify the problem. A copy of the census record was secured from Washington, on which appeared the names of his grandparents as father and mother, and the child's age, but not the date of birth. Copies of all of these records

were made for the registrar, each contributing a meager bit of information.

Fortunately, after much search, it was discovered that Mr. Allen's brother compiled, and had printed, a genealogy of the Allen family. In that book, on a certain page, was actually listed Mr. Allen's birth, naming the proper parents, also the birth date and birthplace. The registrar, with the approval of the state Department of Health, accepted this collection of material and made the necessary birth certificate so that our man Allen went to work for the glider factory, happy in the assurance that he really had been born.

Because of the lack of official records in the early days, the church, in many cases, provided the only record of birth, marriages, and deaths. These records have become in many cases the only semi-official sources available.

You may be interested in a specific instance encountered while trying to acquire some of these records. My assistance was requested to help obtain a set of church records which had been missing for years. Information came from a registrar who had heard hints that they might possibly be in the possession of a former church clerk who resided on an old, run down, weather beaten farm. Others had attempted to gain a hearing there without success.

The day was very snowy, with a high wind blowing, which condition would ordinarily have rated an invitation inside to talk business, but the little old lady who answered my knock seemed satisfied at first to let me remain outside. After stating that I was from the State Library on a matter of business, and that her own distant cousin, the probate judge, had suggested that I should call, she finally allowed me to enter.

What a place that old fashioned kitchen was! On one side was a rusty old kitchen range piled high with wet wood which had been brought in from the fields, and the oven was packed full of wet bark. Half a dozen antique chairs, scattered about the room, were stacked high with books, papers, and old clothes. The large old-fashioned table in the center of the room was covered with food cans, empty, half full, and full; also an eloquent array of patent medicine bottles; and a couple of large bowls partly filled with dirty clothes soaking in ice-coated water.

After much preliminary conversation, I mentioned that I came to look at the church records to make an estimate of the cost of photo-

copying them for the State Library. She hesitated, but finally admitted that they were in her possession. Then very unexpectedly she announced that that she was not afraid of me, because she had a little six year old girl in the next room whom she had instructed to run home and tell her mother if I showed any signs of making a disturbance. I assured her she need have no fear, for I should take particular pleasure in going out any time she cared to ask me to remove myself.

A lengthy history of her family, and a recitation of how brave they were, followed. Suddenly her fears vanished. Then she grudgingly produced the volumes, one at a time, from under the bed in an adjoining room. Finally she agreed to let the library copy them, come spring. A subsequent call convinced her that the records should be copied immediately, and with her permission, the work was accomplished. That precious information has been rescued, and is safely protected!

Land records have been recorded in most states for many years. In our section, the examiner of public records has direct charge of these records, their indexing and protection. The practice of retaining both town and county clerks over long periods is usually helpful, both from an administrative point of view and also from the angle of efficiency in record keeping.

Whenever a new record official comes into office, the examiner spends some time explaining the work and discussing problems with the new office holder.

Any general changes in methods are discussed with town officials at a general meeting of all town clerks in their association.

It is the duty of town clerks to receive for record whatever documents are presented to him or her for recording. In spite of carelessness on the part of conveyancers, and the general public, who often fail to familiarize themselves with their deeds, great advance has been made in accuracy of description of property transferred.

A glaring example of how not to describe a piece of property appears in a deed dated 1812 recorded in Hartford.

> 147 acres, 3 roods and 19 rods after deducting whatever swamp, water, rock and road areas there may be included therein and all other lands of little or no value, the same being part of said deceased's 1280 acre colony grant, and the portion hereby set off being known as near to and on the other side of Black Oak Ridge bounded and described more in

> particular as follows, to wit: Commencing at a heap of stone about a stone's throw from a certain small clump of alders, near a brook running down off from a rather high part of said ridge, thence by a straight line to a certain marked white birch tree about two or three times as far from a jog in the fence going around a ledge nearby, thence by another straight line in a different direction around said ledge and the Great Swamp so called . . . thence after turning around in another direction and by a sloping straight line to a certain heap of stone which is by pacing just eighteen rods and about ½ rod more from the stump of the big hemlock tree where Philo Blake killed the bear, thence to the corner begun at by two straight lines of about equal length which are to be run in by some skilled and competent surveyor so as to include the area and acreage as hereinbefore set forth.

Fortunately bears have migrated from our part of the country so that most property is now bounded by lines indicating standard measurement between merestones, set for that purpose.

Tax laws are continually undergoing change. Forms and procedures vary somewhat from year to year. This past summer our state inaugurated a five day school for tax officials with courses pertaining to general tax problems and records. This school is the outgrowth of co-operation between the tax commissioner with his several division heads, and the Department of Business Administration of the University of Connecticut at Storrs, Connecticut. All of the tuition, housing, meals, and recreation were covered by a fee of twenty dollars.

Without circularization outside of our state, officials came as students from several states—one from as far west as Wichita, Kansas. Plans were originally made to take care of possibly thirty students, but when registration day came, more than eighty applied for admission. It is notable that every student completed all of the courses. Every person was present at every session of the school and was given a certificate signed by the dean of the university, showing the work done.

The tax commissioner of the state gave the registrants opportunity to make suggestions and offer criticisms of the courses which will prove helpful in making plans for another year. It is expected that next year the basic course used this year will be repeated, and more advanced subjects will be added as need is indicated.

Although opportunities for similar instruction had previously been given in one or two other states for an hour at a time in evening

schools, this is the first school of its kind (as far as we know) which has devoted a continuous five-day period to increasing the efficiency of tax officials, and perhaps indicates the advisability of making available similar opportunities for other groups.

This is a short sketch of a small section of the romance of keeping local archives in a small state. We gratefully acknowledge the advice and inspiration given us by our helpful sisters and brothers, and are always glad to reciprocate.

HAROLD S. BURT

Connecticut State Library

THE LOCAL HISTORIAN IN NEW YORK[1]

THE local historian in New York state is a public official. His functions and duties are described in the Education Law. His appointment is provided for by law. He is appointed by local public officials. He is paid, if at all, and receives expenses, if any, out of locally raised public funds.

It is relevant therefore to refer to the law and to discover what it contains and what it omits. It is equally important to discuss what the local historians' opportunities are in addition to the duties enumerated in the law. It is also important to know what may be done eventually to change the law, and to make the work more effective.

According to the Education Law[2] of the state of New York, the local historian is expected "to collect and preserve material relating to the history of the political subdivision for which he or she is appointed." The statute provides further that "such historian shall examine into the condition, classification and safety from fire of the public records of the public offices" in the political subdivisions of the state "and shall call to the attention of the local authorities and the State Historian any material of local value which should be acquired for preservation." The local historian is expected to make an annual report to the local appointing authorities and to the state historian. Upon retirement or removal from office he or she is required to turn over to his or her successor "all materials gathered during his or her incumbency and all correspondence relating thereto."

According to the law each county may have a county historian. Each city, town, and village is required to have an historian. If all appointments were made, there would be about sixteen hundred local historians in New York state. Actually there are about nine hundred at the present time. One of the difficulties in securing appointments is that the law provides that "such historian shall serve without compensation, unless the governing board . . . shall otherwise provide." Local authorities are, however, empowered to "ap-

[1] A paper read at the eighth annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, November 9, 1944.

[2] The organization and administration of the work of the local historians is in charge of the state historian, who serves immediately under the associate commissioner for higher and professional education in the State Education Department. The work of the historians is thus closely associated with the educational program of the state.

propriate, raise by tax and expend moneys for historical purposes within their several jurisdictions." In the localities in which there are the most forward-looking public-spirited local authorities we find a tendency to provide some funds for salary and expense accounts for the local historians. A great deal still remains to be done. As a matter of interest the law provides also that "local authorities . . . are hereby authorized and empowered . . . to contract with the trustees of an historical association . . . for the support of any or all historical edifices situated within the boundaries" of their own local area.

Nowhere in the law is there any provision regarding the qualifications which local historians should have nor is any provision made for training them or for the termination of the incumbency of any particular person. These and other gaps will need to be filled in in the course of time. A beginning is already being made.

It should be apparent from the laws relating to local historians in New York state that they are regarded as public servants performing a public service. But what is the public service? The public service may be defined as fulfilling the needs and the wants of the public with respect to any aspect of people's business or recreational life. This means that if information is sought by any person within the state, and for that matter outside of the state, concerning any historical materials relating to his business or to his recreational life the local historian is obligated to try to get the information. This may appear to be requiring a great deal of local historians but I believe this interpretation of the duties of a public servant is a sound one.

The first and most important function of the local historian is that of assisting all other local officers. The county historian should be prepared to assist the county clerk, county treasurer, the board of supervisors and even the county court in their performance of the public business. In like manner city, town, and village historians should be prepared to assist local officers in their respective subdivisions. If they are to perform these duties to the best advantage, they need to collect and preserve such public records as are not being properly looked after. It is only too evident that when town and village offices change hands records are left in attics or barns and are not transferred to the new incumbents in the local offices. It is very definitely the function of the local historian to see that these records are properly preserved, even if he has to place them in a

special depository of his own. Not infrequently we hear of cases where records of considerable importance are discovered which are put to good use in the settlement of claims either public or private.

We suggest that local historians make copies of the minutes of town and village boards so that in case the originals are lost there will be duplicates. We ask them to copy church registers of the period prior to the 1880's when the Vital Statistics Law first went into effect. We also ask them to copy the names in old graveyards and to secure dates of birth and death where there is any evidence to be found. We suggest that they keep newspaper files and collect correspondence which is purely of a local nature, photographs and the like.

Owing to the impact of the war on local communities we have under way in New York state what is being done elsewhere—a war records program. We have been and are laying particular emphasis upon the collection of information concerning the services of men and women in the armed forces. Through collaboration with county and city historians we drew up a war service records form, which is in no sense a state form but which is being used in a number of counties and in additional local communities. The information is gathered by city, town, and village historians or by volunteers directed by them. One copy of the information is kept by the city, town, or village historian and one copy is forwarded to the county historian. We have felt that it is far better to encourage local interest and local effort through a program of decentralization than to request or to require that copies of all service forms be sent to the state historian's office in Albany. The local war councils have been instructed to appoint as recording officers local historians wherever possible. This means that when the Offices of Civilian Defense and Civilian Mobilization close up in the localities which they serve there should be local historians who can take over the records intact because they themselves have been the recording officers. We are not certain at this time that this program is being effectively carried out but it is a part of the over-all picture which we are trying to carry through.

Local historians are also being encouraged to collect other kinds of war records, particularly the records of activities in the communities such as the accomplishments of service clubs, fraternal organizations, and the Red Cross. We have not asked them to do very much about preserving the records of war industry because we realize that they

are not in a position to do it effectively. We have asked them to assist in the waste paper salvage campaign by seeing to it that considerable quantities of waste paper are actually salvaged and at the same time to see that no valuable historical materials are destroyed.

Assisting local officers and collecting various kinds of records are only one part of the job of the local historian. In New York state there are approximately one hundred and thirty-five privately organized historical societies. It is extremely important that there should be no clash between the officially appointed historians and the members of local historical societies. We therefore urge all local historians to become active members of and to participate vigorously in the work of historical societies in the hope that the association of the two will bring strength to both. As a matter of fact, a number of the local historians already have their headquarters in the rooms of the local societies. We are encouraging local historians also to assist the teachers in the local schools in carrying through the social studies program through the elementary and secondary school grades. They can provide teachers with materials for instructional purposes. They can help organize historical trips and pageants and in many ways assist historical instruction. We are encouraging the local historians also to assist the many libraries to be found in small communities and to assist the local museums as well. In fact, we feel that the historical society, the local library, and the museum are so closely associated that they can further the work of local history if the local historian will take some initiative in the matter.

There remain the problems of research and publication. Because the great majority of local historians are not interested in research as such or in writing, we are encouraging them to make known what materials they have available for those who wish to write. Where they themselves are interested in writing, we try to encourage them to do that. It might be said that there is no uniform pattern which can be followed in this regard.

It would not be sound practice, even if it were possible, to require a uniform pattern of office arrangements for local historians. At the present time some county historians have their offices in the county buildings, some in historical societies' headquarters, others in libraries, an occasional one in his home. City, town, and village historians show no greater uniformity in their office arrangements, except that town and village historians too frequently keep all their records in their

own homes. What needs to be emphasized is that all local historians should build for the future. They should remember that some day others will succeed them in office and they should accordingly see to it that whatever they do there can and will be continuous development of the work.

One serious lack hitherto has been the absence of a program designed to train local historians once they have been appointed. Plans are now under way to provide in Albany in the summer of 1945 and succeeding summers a training program which it is hoped will be attended by volunteers, their expenses to be financed by the local authorities. The program itself envisions instruction in the collection and preservation of different types of primary sources, private and official, simple museum and library techniques, and assistance to elementary and secondary schools.

Further to encourage their training and their efficiency there was formed in October, 1944, the New York State Association of County Historians. Its membership includes all county and city historians, as well as town and village historians who are recommended for membership by their own county historians. The association has announced as its objectives the following: increasing the efficiency and improving the status of its members; encouraging the collection and preservation of records of all kinds; working with the state historian to complete an index of historical source materials in the state; aiding research and publication relating to local history; co-operating with public officers in the subdivisions of the state in carrying out their duties.

Some years will elapse before the local historians will all be functioning effectively. This is because it will be necessary to educate the local public authorities to the need of appointing adequately qualified persons and of paying them salaries and expenses, a condition of affairs which fortunately does exist in a number of counties, and to a lesser degree in the other subdivisions of the state. But if the local authorities are to be won over to the program, those local historians who are now appointed must be trained to do their jobs, they must perform the kind of public service which is invaluable to other local officers and in the communities in which they live. If they do these things, then we shall have a demand from all over the state for changes in the law which will establish qualifications, civil service status, pay and expenses. In the meantime, we can do much to

encourage local historians to remember that they are public servants and to perform their duties accordingly; and we can do much to encourage the local authorities to recognize the work of the local historians.

It is hardly any exaggeration to say that the local historian who best performs the functions which are here outlined can be extraordinarily instrumental in developing community pride and local patriotism. We believe that the strength and vigor of local communities is to a great degree a measure of the strength and vitality of our nation. If we are to preserve the fundamentals of American life and the strength of its democracy, we had better keep alive an interest in the living past from which come the foundations on which our American life is built. To preserve our democracy we must know how our democratic system has emerged in the past. We must likewise cherish the continuous development of our American heritage in the future. There can be no better way than to collect and to preserve the records of the past and the present as guides for the present and the future.

ALBERT B. COREY

State Historian, New York

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

RICHARD G. WOOD, Editor

The National Archives, Washington 25, D.C.

Local History: How to Gather It, Write It, and Publish It, by Donald Dean Parker, Head of the Department of History and Political Science, South Dakota State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. Revised and edited by Bertha E. Josephson for the Committee on Guide for Study of Local History of the Social Science Research Council. (New York. Social Science Research Council, 1944. Pp. xiv, 186).

The social historian, who must depend on the effort of the local historian to guard him against too easy generalization, as well as the user for whom it is primarily intended—"the serious-minded graduate of high school or college" who has had no graduate training in history—will feel himself indebted to the Social Science Research Council for the preparation of this manual. As a matter of fact, in attacking this problem the council had the interests of a somewhat larger group in mind, believing the effective study of local history to be basic to the social sciences in general. But it is in the extent to which the manual succeeds in suggesting to the local historian "both general ideas and specific aids," perhaps particularly the latter, that its immediate usefulness is to be judged.

The manual is the product of distinguished co-operation involving Dr. Parker (who supplied an already prepared manuscript on the subject), the Committee on the Guide for Study of Local History (Messrs. Crittenden, Eggan, Heaton, Merk, Schlesinger, Shryock, White, Wirth, Nichols), and several other consultants and contributors of data or of separate chapters or appendices (Mesdames Green, Josephson, who also edited the entire volume, Messrs. Cappon, Loehr, Shalloo, Still, Young).

Part I, "Gathering Material for Local History," outlines the sources of information and indicates where they are to be found .Separate chapters deal with "library and general sources," private sources in private hands, newspapers and periodicals, public records (national, state, and local), business records, and church records and cemetery inscriptions. Part II, "Writing Local History," deals with the technique of bibliography, note-gathering, outlining of materials, and composition, including a model outline for a local history and a chapter on "Bibliography, Addenda and Index." Part III, "Publishing Local History," presents a clear exposition of relative merits and relative costs of the various means of publishing local history—printing, lithoprinting and planographing, mimeographing, and hectographing—together with some practical hints on promotion. The volume closes with an appendix, "Writing the War History of Communities," and a bibliography.

Inevitably there are a few errors or instances where the latest information available has not been made use of, but the reviewer would not emphasize them unduly. Although it is true that few of the early censuses after 1790 have been printed (p. 48), the National Archives has reproduced some of them in its file microcopy program and hopes to make more of them available in this manner following the war. Again, pension records of soldiers of the Revolutionary and later wars are now in the custody of the archivist of the United States and not in the Veterans' Administration (p. 67). It might also be pointed out, with respect to the public records of the states, that the legislative journals of the states for the early period are now available, through the co-operative efforts of the Library of Congress and the University of North Carolina, in the form of microcopies from the Library of Congress. Inasmuch as the bibliography may be used as a general guide as well as a list of the works used in the compilation of this volume, it is unfortunate that the latest edition of certain titles has not been selected. Such sins of omission and commission, however, will not operate seriously to impair the manual's real usefulness in making explicit to the novice the step-by-step process by which history is written.

Lester W. Smith

The National Archives

Disposition of Official Records, issued by U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Plant and Operations. O.P.O. Publication No. 1 (Rev.). (Washington, D.C. September, 1944. Pp. 41.)

This publication, a revision of an earlier manual, describes the regulations and procedures for disposition of executive documents under Public Law No. 115 (Seventy-eighth Congress). The most significant sections of the manual are those concerning the definition of records and instructions on the preparation of disposal schedules. The elimination from the files of a large bulk of ephemeral material as non-record material is of benefit to the archivist and historian as well as to the administrator. No criticism can be made in the elimination of the material lists in the manual as non-record material. The section on the preparation of schedules encourages the units of the department to formulate systematic plans for the preservation of worthwhile material, and the elimination of temporary and subsidiary records. This method of controlled disposition, now recognized by Public Law No. 115, has been practiced in the Department of Agriculture since 1918.

The section titled, "Administrative Review and Appraisal," contains the core of the whole disposal problem. It attempts to put into writing guides to be followed in evaluating records for disposition. The suggestions given in this section will be a valuable guide to the administrator or records officer,

until archivists and historians agree among themselves as to the type of records to be preserved.

LEWIS J. DARTER, JR.

Navy Department

Organización y Objetivos del Archivo Gráfico de la Nación, by Sergio Chiáppori, subdirector of the archivo. (Buenos Aires. Talleres S. A. Peuser Lda., 1944. Pp. 27. Reprint.)

No great amount of interest is likely to have greeted this article in the United States. It first made its appearance in this country tucked away snugly between the paper covers of an issue of the *Boletín* of the Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas of Buenos Aires, and more recently it appeared as a reprint. Both issues were in Spanish. This fact, coupled with the obscurity of the article and its slender size, are substantial reasons for its reaching only those few readers who are most persistent in their search of new titles.

The article, as its title implies, outlines the organization and objectives of the Archivo Gráfico, created in 1939 as an arm of the Argentine Ministry of Justice and Public Instruction for the care and keeping of "motion pictures, photographs, daguerreotypes, and engravings . . . illustrative of the history of Argentina and of the institutions and persons who have been a part of it." The article is witness to the official recognition by that nation that photographs in all forms are becoming an increasingly important archival medium, of vast potentialities, and that they present peculiar problems of storage and service. To some it might seem that a disproportionate emphasis has been given to indexes, registers, and other controls over the collections and to the building and equipment of the archives. But photographs and their negatives do need special housing and handling and the subject mastery of photographic records requires skills and techniques far more complicated and ingenious than are necessary for other types of archival material. A more extensive report on this experience, although it might have upset the symmetry of this study, would have bolstered it considerably. The article is thus less than half a loaf and serves more to stimulate than to satiate one's hunger for knowledge of the advancements and accomplishments made by the archivists of Latin-American nations.

GASTON LITTON

The National Archives

Annual Report of The Librarian of Congress for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1943. (Washington, D.C. United States Government Printing Office, 1944. Pp. 279.)

Here once more is the periodic appraisal of the growth and accomplishments of our national library. Administrators of historical societies, curators of

manuscript collections, as well as archivists, will find herein much to arouse their interest and sympathy. Moreover, they will find portions of it good reading fare: Mr. MacLeish's widely recognized ability with words has put clarity and vitality into several sections of this report. This is especially so regarding Part I, on operations.

Librarians have been following with keen interest the reorganization of the Library of Congress, for which their counsel was sought before it was initiated. The progress of this regrouping of its divisions into a half dozen administrative units, along functional lines, is assessed, and found wanting in some aspects—particularly with regard to the relation between acquisition of materials and their processing. The willingness to adapt the original plan in the light of experience under it is a good sign that there is no desire to force the library into a strait-jacket.

The section on the state of the collections has especial interest for curators of historical societies. There is a brief account of the activities of the keeper of the collections in connection with the security of materials evacuated to repositories outside Washington. We read that there was a general cleaning of collections remaining in the Manuscript Division after the evacuations. It is not encouraging to see by Appendix XII (p. 248) that the bindery processed but 47,787 manuscripts in contrast to 83,017 the previous year. It would be interesting to know the annual average of pieces needing attention in this division with an inventory of 7,500,000 pieces at June 30, 1943. The picture is clearer with regard to printed material: increased binding costs, with an appropriations cut for this service amounting to $100,000 is adding 6000 volumes annually to an already large backlog of unusable items. War is imposing privation upon large book and manuscript collections just as sternly as upon the smaller, more local ones.

The part of the report covering acquisitions begins with a reiteration by the librarian of "The Canons of Selection" which he set forth in 1940. It is followed by descriptions of newly added materials in twenty special divisions or subject-fields.

Accessions of manuscripts occupy the largest space in this part (pp. 115-130). Especially noteworthy additions appear among the papers of American statesmen. There is recorded an extensive collection of the letters of William C. Whitney, a powerful supporter of Grover Cleveland and Secretary of the Navy during his first term, subsequently regarded as "the creator of the New Navy." Another large unit has been the papers of the now deceased Congressman from Nebraska, George W. Norris. The Manuscript Division received also one of the largest collections ever given to its care—the 180,000 pieces of Booker T. Washington papers. Scanning these accounts of large new collections, and the more itemized lists put into the news notes of *The American Historical Review*, one cannot help wondering whether we who

work in historical manuscripts shouldn't begin applying qualitative examination, perhaps the archivists' disposal practices or some similar set of criteria, to the masses of paper confronting us.

ROBERT W. HILL

The New York Public Library

First Report of the Public Records Commission to the General Assembly of the State of Vermont, September 1, 1944. (Montpelier. 1944. Pp. 46.)

The state of Vermont has been slow in enacting legislation dealing with public records. It was not until 1937 that the General Assembly passed a law creating the Public Records Commission. This commission of five members consists of the secretary of state, the state librarian, the director, the chairman of the Vermont Historical Society, and one other person appointed by the governor. The act was amended in 1939 and again in 1943. The last law appropriated $2,500.00 annually for the maintenance of the commission.

After the 1943 law was passed, the commission was reorganized and it entered actively upon the duties assigned to it. It employed the services of Mr. Harold S. Burt, examiner of public records, state of Connecticut, who after an investigation made a six-page report on the public records. It also procured the services of Mr. Henry Howard Eddy of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York, who made a more extensive and detailed report. Mr. Eddy gave estimates of the bulk of public records which needed preservation as well as other information and recommendations. These reports are printed in full.

The commission also reports on other activities such as its recommendation for disposition of useless records; an interpretation by the attorney general of the term "Public Records" as contained in the law; the opinion of the commission on the advisability of erecting a new building rather than having an office building for housing the archives; microfilms and photographic prints; present conditions of archives; and a financial statement.

It seems to this reviewer that the commission should have printed its report in full in the first part of the report and included the surveys as appendices. As it is, these surveys are printed in the middle of the pamphlet. In the opinion of this reviewer, the name, address, date of expiration of each member's term, and the organization should have been given first after which the full report of the commission should follow. This criticism, however, does not lessen the importance of the information contained therein. The surveys of Mr. Burt and Mr. Eddy contain good general information for others who are interested in establishing archives or who may be interested in enlarging or modernizing old buildings which are used for the housing of archives and historical manuscripts.

D. L. CORBITT

North Carolina Department of Archives and History

Ninth Annual Report of the Archivist of the Hall of Records, State of Maryland, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 1943 to June 30, 1944. (Annapolis. 1944. Pp. 32.)

In his letter of transmittal to the records commission as well as in the report proper, Morris L. Radoff, archivist, reveals more than just a "cut and dried" listing of accessions, circulation, and the like. The accessions are there, and so are the statistics on circulation, preservation and repair, photocopying, microfilm, and all other paraphernalia so typical of archival and manuscript depository reports, but interspersed, there is also a very human and personal touch, revealing the administrator's concern with the salary scale of his staff, pride in the variety of archives used by searchers, and explanations as to why certain types of records were used more frequently than before.

The formal letter of transmittal is followed by a report on the activities of the records commission, the governing body for the Maryland archives; then comes a section about the staff, and it is pleasing to note that all staff members are listed, even those doing maintenance chores. The archivist rejoices in the increase of staff salaries "especially in the lower brackets," in the procedure for regular advancement, in the granting of increased sick leave with pay, and the inauguration of a retirement system. To these improvements does he attribute improvement in staff morale and slackening of staff turnover.

The financial statement reveals that the Hall of Records received a general appropriation of $32,893 and spent on general expenditures $27,669.78. Receipts for such services as photostating, microfilming, certifying, and the like brought in a total of nearly $600. Circulation statistics show that about two searchers per day, or 614 per year visited the hall while 667 postal inquiries were handled. No record of telephone inquiries is made. A list of printed and typed and hand-written "Aids to Research" is included, and a brief explanation of the arrangement of material received from the executive department is given. The listing (with explanations) of destruction of useless records by various state and local agencies offers concrete evidence of the type of records that may safely be destroyed under a judicious procedure. The sections on preservation and repair, photocopying, and microfilming are prospective as well as retrospective.

In the section on accessions—archival materials are listed, in addition to records received from the state executive department, acquisitions of originals of land records from Frederick County and Somerset County (which are being replaced with photocopies). Other noteworthy collections include the Iron Chest Accounts, No. 1, 1734-1767, of the first issue of paper money in Maryland; and a number of private collections, such as the Baldwin collection relating to churches and schools of Severn Parish. A list of library accessions completes the report.

Bertha E. Josephson

Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society

Twentieth Biennial Report of the North Carolina State Department of Archives and History (formerly the North Carolina Historical Commission), 1942-1944. Bulletin No. 44. Christopher Crittenden, Secretary. (Raleigh, North Carolina. 1944. Pp. 59.)

It is interesting to note that problems of archival and manuscript care are likely to be the same the nation over. After enumerating the services of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History—very signal services, incidentally—the secretary shows that a new building with modern equipment, shared with no other department, is needed, as well as larger appropriations and a bigger staff. This is the story from coast to coast. Like many other states, North Carolina combines its archival agency and its historical society. A recent article in this publication, "Librarians and Archivists," by Herman Kahn, shows the inherent weaknesses of such a union. Is it possible that a separation of these two somewhat disparate agencies for preserving records would redound to the benefit of both in North Carolina, and result in increased appropriations adequate to the need of each? Consideration, at least, might be given to the possibilities of such a divorce.

The same problems and a similar union of agencies are found in the reviewer's state. There experience seems to prove that the problems of the two united agencies must be presented separately to legislators and state officials in order to command attention. Almost certainly, therefore, the final result will be an archives establishment separate from the state historical society.

Indeed, the fine report made by Mr. Crittenden on two years' labors and acquisitions is not without signs of confusion in aim and methods resulting from the state's attempt to make one agency do the work of two departments. Archives must be administered on totally different principles from historical manuscripts, and it is the rare person or institution that can do equal justice to both under one roof.

Grace Lee Nute

Minnesota Historical Society

The Annual Report of the National Library of Wales for 1943-1944. (Aberstwyth, Wales. 1944. Pp. 36.)

This work is of particular archival interest because of the deposit of the episcopal, chapter, diocesan, and other records of the Church of Wales reported and described therein. The action of the Representative Body of the church in deciding to place these records on deposit in the national library is hailed as "a landmark in the history of British archives," and is expected to have lasting effect upon records custody throughout the country, and to be instrumental in attracting other classes of records to the library.

The records already deposited, comprising episcopal and diocesan registry

and chapter records, consist of about a million items. When all such records, together with certain other classes (parochial ecclesiastical records, and the records of, and in the custody of, the Representative Body and Governing Body of the church) have been deposited the total will be about a million and three quarters. They range in date from the fourteenth to the twentieth century, half of them covering the period 1700 to 1850. Only the main groups are listed in an appendix (pp. 32-34) of the *Annual Report* since a comprehensive account is scheduled to appear in the National Library of Wales *Journal* for 1945. It is anticipated that, with the recovery of estrays and the normal annual accrual, the collection will exceed two million items within a period of ten years.

MATILDA F. HANSON

The National Archives

Guide to the Manuscripts of the Wisconsin Historical Society, edited by Alice E. Smith. (Madison. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1944. Pp. xiv, 290.)

The description of manuscript collections has not been reduced to a technique. Possibly it would be a mistake to try. However, some general principles could be standardized, such as use of terms "papers," "collections," "correspondence," and others; the biographica data; the elimination of meaningless continuities which make English sentences but hamper thought; the proper way of enumerating statistics; the amount of analysis as opposed to general description; the method of handling dates and names of writers represented in the collection.

There have been many guides published during the last fifteen years. Considerable variety on all the above points is inevitable. The Wisconsin Historical Society guide is on many points similar to the Minnesota Historical Society guide (1935). Miss Smith has attained a fine balance between extended analysis and general description. Of course, what every student would like is an extended analysis of each important collection with a complete index, something like the Carnegie guides to manuscripts in the European archives relating to America, as for example the Paullin and Paxson. But such a guide is costly. Extremely few staffs have time for it, and WPA help is not quite up to that mark.

Furthermore the variety of types of collections make a standard description impracticable. There is no greater variety in historical work than is found in handling manuscript collections. For instance, the completely adequate description of the papers of Joseph T. Dodge, 1845-1899 (entry 185) relates that they are of "a Wisconsin civil engineer relating to railroad building." The type of letters, where from, what roads are covered, the six

lines on subject matter really covers the material. On the other hand the description of the James R. Doolittle Papers, 1831-1935, with fifteen boxes including sixteen volumes (entry 187), is about the same length as the Dodge, but covers broad general subjects such as various political activities and the slavery controversy. So far as it goes it is well done and it could not expand a little; it must begin an extended analysis as the next step.

The first criticism at hand is the minimum of biographical detail, true of practically every guide except the William L. Clements which, however, sacrifices description. A sketch of the subject should be the skeletal organization of each important collection. One other criticism which I would make is the treatment of Wisconsin's archival material. A brief discussion of the housing and status of the archives would have been a decided advantage. I would suggest their listing in an archival arrangement in a separate section instead of alphabetically under "Wisconsin."

This is an important addition to our archival knowledge. It contains 802 entries covering over 600,000 manuscripts and over 2000 volumes of manuscripts. Though the central theme be Wisconsin, great resources therein relate to our national history.

CURTIS W. GARRISON

The Hayes Memorial

"Territorial Papers of Wyoming in the National Archives," by W. Turrentine Jackson. *Annals of Wyoming*, 16 (January, 1944), 45-55.

"Territorial Papers in the Department of Interior Archives, 1873-1890: Washington, Idaho, and Montana," by W. Turrentine Jackson. *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 35 (October, 1944), 323-341.

"Dakota Territorial Papers in the Department of the Interior Archives," by W. Turrentine Jackson. *North Dakota Historical Quarterly*, 11 (July, 1944), 209-220.

Administration of the territories by the federal government resulted in the acquisition of thousands of documents, records, and reports most of which are now housed in the National Archives. Such presidential appointees to territorial positions as governors, secretaries, judges, and the like, were required to make periodic reports to their respective superiors as to the condition and affairs of the territory they represented. Reports until the year 1873 were made to the Department of State and thereafter to the Department of Interior.

In each of these three articles the author gives a generalized description of territorial papers in the National Archives which is very similar in content—almost a repetition. This is followed in each case by a breakdown under the administration of the respective governors describing the Executive Proceedings, Appointment Papers, Charges Files, Domestic Letter Books, and Special

Letters as well as the Miscellaneous Letters from the Patents and Miscellaneous Division. A description of the Penitentiary Papers for each of the territories involved is also given.

While the author through these articles has described much valuable material vital to historical research he has omitted other significant records found in the National Archives. A good example is found in connection with the records of the territory of Wyoming. It is a fact recognized by all good historians of the West that the cattle industry was solidly intertwined in the weave of Wyoming's early history. It is as basic to Wyoming's early history as the search for gold was to the exploits of the early Spaniards in America. No one will question the fact that the papers described in Mr. Jackson's Wyoming article shed some light on the development of the cattle industry, yet the incompleteness of this presentation is appalling in consideration of the fact that the author had only to go a few steps farther to add additional equally significant materials to his catalogue. In a recent visit to the National Archives this writer had occasion to examine the Wyoming materials and through the able co-operation of Mr. Herman Kahn, chief, Division of Interior Department Archives, establish the availability of much Wyoming material unmentioned by the author. Chief among these are:

1. The letters received and sent by the Division of Lands and Railroads, Office of the Secretary of Interior. Closely allied to these documents are the Miscellaneous Correspondence files of the General Land Office which deal among other things with the controversies of private fencing on the public domain as well as problems of overgrazing, thus contributing to cattle wars and the eventual decline of the cattle industry.

2. Briefs of the correspondence of the Commissioner of Cattle, an office established in 1881 by the Treasury Department are valuable in relation to cattle quarantines which materially affected the Wyoming industry.

3. Records of the Department of Justice and particularly the correspondence of the Attorney General lend additional light on the economic struggles which finally culminated in the "Johnson County War" after Wyoming had entered statehood.

4. Military post records of the War Department are vital in that they portray the outrages committed by cattle rustlers and the quelling of disturbances by the troops.

5. The population schedules of the Bureau of the Census available in the National Archives, show the trends of industry in territorial Wyoming and could in no wise be profitably neglected by the social or economic historian making a study of this area.

6. Archives of such governmental offices as the Office of Indian Affairs, Interstate Commerce Commission, the Customs Service and the Diplomatic and Consular Service although not directly related to the Wyoming archives

also contain material which would be vital to a study of the territorial activities in Wyoming.

From the foregoing analysis it seems logical to conclude that it would be unsafe to assume that the listing of materials by Mr. Jackson in the other two articles is complete. Their value as aids to research, although incomplete, cannot be questioned, but through soliciting the co-operation of the National Archives staff any future work of this nature could have even a greater value. There has long existed the need for an adequate analysis of these documents, and students neglecting to use the facilities of the National Archives by-pass one of their finest opportunities in research.

Virgil V. Peterson

Colorado State Archives

SHORTER NOTICES

Richard G. Wood, Editor
The National Archives, Washington 25, D.C.

In the pamphlet, *How to Organize a Local Historical Society*, by Bertha L. Heilbron. *Bulletin* No. 9 of the American Association for State and Local History (Washington, November, 1944. Pp. 30, numbered 227-256), the interest of the archivist or custodian of manuscripts does not lie so much in the main body of the work as in the appendices. Here are printed two laws for constitutions for local historical societies, articles of incorporation for a county historical society, and an act authorizing local government aid for historical work. These are adapted from actual laws and may be compared to the model laws for a state archives establishment printed in THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST (April, 1940, and April, 1944). Incidentally they point out the need of a current printed analysis of the various state and local archival laws.—R. G. Wood

NEWS NOTES

KARL L. TREVER, Editor

The National Archives, Washington 25, D.C.

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS

The following committee appointments for the year 1944-1945 have been announced:

Archival Buildings: Victor Gondos, Jr., chairman; Charlotte Capers, Leon de Valinger, Jr., Morris L. Radoff, William J. Van Schreeven.

Filing Equipment: Mrs. Virginia Leddy Gambrell, chairman; Grace L. Nute.

Information: Mrs. Elizabeth E. Hamer, chairman; Roger Thomas.

Institutional Archives: Walter Hausdorfer, chairman; Thomas T. McAvoy, William D. Overman, Thomas H. Spence, Jr.

International Relations: Gaston Litton, chairman; Fred W. Shipman, James F. King, William D. McCain.

Local Records: Harold S. Burt, chairman; Kenneth Blood, Dan Lacy, Virgil V. Peterson, Hermann F. Robinton.

Membership: Henry H. Eddy, chairman; Winnie Allen, Philip C. Brooks, Frances M. Hails, Margaret Pierson, Lancaster Pollard.

Municipal Archives: Richard B. Morris, chairman; Beatrice Decker, Albert B. Corey.

Program, Ninth Annual Meeting: Morris L. Radoff, chairman.

Publication Policies of Archival Agencies: Leon de Valinger, Jr., chairman; Christopher Crittenden, Preston E. Edsall, Alice E. Smith.

Records Administration: Philip C. Brooks, chairman; Christopher Crittenden, Harold S. Burt.

Uniform Legislation: A. R. Newsome, chairman; Richard B. Morris, Francis S. Philbrick.

Writings on Archives and Manuscripts: Karl L. Trever, chairman; Theodore C. Pease, Ernst Posner, Alice E. Smith.

Salvage of Records: Albert B. Corey, chairman.

Two committees will function jointly in behalf of the Society and the American Association for State and Local History:

Interneships: Herbert A. Kellar, chairman; Howard H. Peckham.

War Records Manual: Leon de Valinger, Jr., chairman of Committee on Publication Policies, with same personnel (see above).

The following applicants for membership were approved by the Council in January, 1945:

Sister Mary Celestine, R.S.M., Sisters of Mercy, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Rev. Jasper J. Chiodini, diocesan archivist, St. Louis, Missouri.

Edwin R. Flatequal, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Elizabeth A. Leslie, assistant curator, Michigan Historical Collections, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Thornton W. Mitchell, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Capt. P. T. Wright, USN (Ret.), Operational Records of the Navy, Washington, D.C.

Dwight H. Wilson, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

State of California, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento.

Reprints of the 1943 and 1944 *Writings on Archives and Manuscripts* may be purchased for twenty-five cents a copy from Lester J. Cappon, secretary of the Society, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.

The work of the Committee on the Salvage of Records has resulted in the following release being sent out by the War Production Board to all of its regional offices:

ARCHIVISTS PARTICIPATE IN PAPER SALVAGE PROGRAM

The Society of American Archivists called upon people everywhere, in a resolution passed at its annual business meeting at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on November 8, 1944 to dig out their accumulations of papers, to segregate the few valuable ones, and to give the remainder to the waste paper salvage campaign. Miss Margaret C. Norton, Archivist of Illinois and President of the Society, appointed Dr. Albert B. Corey, State Historian of New York, and Dr. Philip C. Brooks, of the National Archives, as a committee to prepare a statement concerning the campaign.

The Society requests that public officials, business firms, and householders look through papers in attics, storerooms, and cellars, sort out materials of historical value, and turn the remainder over to the salvage campaign. It strongly recommends that correspondence, account books, diaries, photographs, and public documents be saved. Persons who hesitate to throw away any old papers for fear that they may destroy valuable materials are urged to get in touch with local historians, historical societies, state and national archival and historical authorities, or libraries for guidance in segregating valuable papers from the useless ones.

The Society is interested in the preservation of those documents, papers and letters which are essential to the carrying on of public business and to an understanding of our American heritage. It is concerned lest people in their enthusiasm for cleaning out cellars, attics, and storerooms throw out valuable manuscripts. On the other hand, valueless material should not be withheld from salvage collections when there is such

desperate need for paper. Probably the total volume of valuable papers will be relatively small in terms of the volume that should be savaged in the waste paper campaign.

The National Archives

Closer relations between archivists and archival institutions in the western hemisphere are being made possible by grants for interneships or fellowships at the National Archives. Through the Interdepartmental Committee for Co-operation with the American Republics, funds have been made available for instituting a long-range program for bringing Latin-American archivists to the United States to work in the National Archives and to become acquainted with North American practices. Such fellowships are being offered to archivists in Chile, Cuba, and Mexico.

As announced in the previous issue of the News Notes, the National Archives and the Maryland Hall of Records were co-operating in the presentation of a short training course on the preservation and administration of archives for custodians of institutional and business archives to be offered by the American University in Washington, D.C., from June 11 to June 30. This course is designed to familiarize such custodians with the basic theories and processes of archival work. It will consist of supervised reading, laboratory work, and classroom instruction in the form of seventeen lectures on such topics as the evaluation and accessioning of archival material, repair and preservation, arrangement and description, reproduction and publication, and reference service. Special emphasis will be given to the problems of small institutions. On three days a week instruction and laboratory work will take place at the Maryland Hall of Records in Annapolis and on the other three days at the National Archives. The course will be conducted by Ernst Posner, adjunct professor of archives administration of the American University, Morris L. Radoff, archivist of the Maryland Hall of Records, and members of the staffs of the Maryland Hall of Records and the National Archives. The fee for the course, which carries three semester hours' credit, is thirty dollars.

Records relating to military affairs continue to predominate among National Archives accessions. Material received recently from the Navy Department includes Naval Intelligence records, among which are reports on subversive activities during the first World War, files of *The Japan Advertiser*, and reports and other records of naval attachés at various diplomatic posts, 1917-1933; records of the Philadelphia Navy Yard, 1827-1926, and the New York Navy Yard, 1842-1922; and records relating to the operation of the Federal Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company at Kearny, New Jersey, by the Navy Department, 1941-1942. The War Department material received consists largely of field records and includes correspondence, maps, and other records of district engineers at Providence, 1800-1921, Albany, 1820-1940,

New York City, 1864-1934, Pittsburgh, 1890-1940, and Philadelphia, 1893-1936; and records of army commands, such as Fort Adams and Headquarters of the Coast Defenses of Narragansett Bay, 1865-1917, Forts Banks, Andrews, Strong, and Warren, 1866-1915, and Fort Huachuca and Headquarters of the 25th Infantry, 1867-1929.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

Materials acquired recently by the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library include manuscripts, photographs, and prints relating to United States naval history; pamphlets and broadsides used in recent Democratic presidential campaigns; and sound recordings, motion pictures, photographs, and books on subjects connected with the present war. From the President was received a gift of some three hundred letters and twenty-two journals and notebooks of Commodore David Conner (1792-1856), commander of the Gulf Squadron during the War with Mexico. The papers cover the years 1812-1855 and touch upon every important period of Conner's life, from his service aboard the *Hornet* in the War of 1812 to his operations against the Mexican ports in the summer and fall of 1846. Some of the letters and most of the journals relate to his family and professional life in Philadelphia, where he was assigned to the navy yard, and in Washington, as an official of the Navy Department. They contain much material on the social history of the period. Other naval history items received from the President include a number of prints, engravings, and photographs of United States war vessels from the period of the Civil War to the present.

Interagency Records Administration Conference

This organization, sponsored by the United States Civil Service Commission, has presented several programs of value and interest to Washington archivists during recent months. At a session on the disposition of records in the field service held on December 22, 1944, Major Wayne Grover, Records Management Branch of the Adjutant General's Office, War Department, described the control of field records of the military establishment and Lt. Comdr. Emmett J. Leahy, USNR, Navy Department, Office of Records Administration, outlined the procedures now being followed in the disposition of navy field records. The presiding officer was Miss Helen Chatfield, archivist of the Treasury Department.

In January the conference heard a discussion of records administration in relation to the administrator. Participants on the panel were John Q. Cannon, administrative assistant to the attorney general, Gus Moe, chief budget examiner, Budget Bureau, Miss Dorothy Daggett, Records Analysis Section War Production Board, and T. Terry Beach, records officer U.S. Coast Guard.

The presiding officer was John F. X. Britt, management analyst, Office of Records Administration, Navy Department.

The February meeting consisted of a panel discussion of the evaluation of records by Robert Ballentine, Records Management Branch, the Adjutant General's Office, Miss Elizabeth Drewry, the National Archives, and Cyril Paquin, Records Division, Foreign Economic Administration. Philip C. Brooks of the National Archives presided.

The Committee of Standards of Performance of the conference has issued a report on *Standards of Performance for Typical Tasks Performed in Mail and File Rooms.*

Office of Records Administration, Navy Department

With a view to greater effectiveness in operations and better utilization of personnel, Lt. Comdr. Emmett J. Leahy, USNR, director of records administration, reorganized his staff in February. In the new organization, Lt. Herbert E. Angel, USNR, continues as assistant director, with primary responsibility for planning and reviewing programs, and he also continues as staff specialist on controlled issuance of circular letters and administrative reference.

At the headquarters of the Office of Records Administration in Washington, the staff is divided into a Correspondence and Records Management Service and a Microfilming Service, with Lt. Edmund D. Dwyer, USNR, and Lt. Ken M. Davee, USNR, respectively, as officers in charge. Lt. Dwyer's immediate assistants are Lt. Charles H. Niemann, USNR, Correspondence Management; Lt. (jg) Charles A. Sterman, USNR, Current Records Management; and Miss Adeline V. Barry, Noncurrent Records Management, who have immediate responsibility for the programs indicated. Lt. Davee has as his assistant officer in charge Lt. J. H. Lane, USNR.

Outside the headquarters office and reporting to the director are (1) the Navy Department Records Center in Washington (formerly Naval Records Depository No. 1), Lt. Paul L. Bishop, USNR, officer in charge; (2) the Naval Records Management Center, Eastern Division, in Philadelphia, Lt. Everett O. Alldredge, USNR, officer in charge; and (3) the Naval Records Management Center, Western Division, in Los Angeles, Lt. (jg) Lewis J. Darter, USNR, officer in charge.

Since its establishment in October, 1941, the activities of the Office of Records Administration have brought about the release for other assignment of 741 persons (man-years), 473,717 square feet of space, and 35,241 units of office equipment, all having a value estimated at $5,252,556. The savings have more than doubled from year to year. In the nine months of the fiscal year 1942 in which the office operated, the savings were $303,132; in 1943,

they were $720,001; in 1944, they were $1,998,208; and in the first half of the fiscal year 1945 (through December 31), they were $2,231,215. The total savings during the thirty-nine-month period were divided as follows:

Salaries of personnel released	$1,241,248
Value of space released	504,139
Value of office equipment released	1,029,563
Net savings from use of microfilm for engineering drawings	2,399,016
Elimination of unessential operations and material costs	78,590
	$5,252,556

Recent inventories show that 367,535 square feet of space in the Navy Department in Washington—one square foot of every nine—is occupied by filing equipment. Navy Department records would occupy double or more the space they now require if 83,683 square feet had not been released by transfers to Naval Records Centers, 48,151 square feet by transfers to the National Archives, and a large, but unknown, amount of space by the scrapping of obsolete records. Three fourths of the space now occupied by files is required for 40,019 filing cabinets. The other quarter of the space is taken by thousands of plan, card, visible, document, insulated, and other types of files.

U.S. Budget Bureau

The Budget Bureau is distributing a series of *Management Bulletins* on the subject of records control. These short pamphlets are in the nature of check lists for the evaluation and improvement of agency records programs. The four bulletins recently issued cover fiscal records, personnel records, property records, and records retirement.

Alabama

Mrs. Marie B. Owen, director of the Alabama State Department of Archives and History, announces the appointment of Miss Maud McLure Kelly, of Birmingham, to the archives staff. Miss Kelly will visit the court houses of the state "for the purpose of investigating the condition, housing, age and extent of county records." Under the laws of Alabama, county officials may deposit their noncurrent records with the Archives Department.

Colorado

The first annual report of the Colorado State Archives is available upon application from the State Historical Society of Colorado, the State Museum, Denver.

Delaware

On January 25, Leon deValinger, archivist of Delaware, presented an interim report on the progress of archival work in the state at a regular meeting of the Public Archives Commission. Among the topics discussed were the classification of records, the publications program, the war history collection, the collection of sound recordings, the repairing of records, and the testing of paper and ink for use in public records offices.

The Public Archives Commission announces the publication of the *Calendar of Kent County Delaware Probate Records, 1680-1800*. This volume of 558 pages of text and an index of 133 pages contains a wealth of historical information. It can be purchased from the commission at the Hall of Records, Dover, for six dollars per copy.

Indiana

Howard H. Peckham, curator of manuscripts at the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, and member of the Society of American Archivists, has been appointed director of the Indiana Historical Bureau, succeeding the late Christopher Coleman.

Iowa

The Iowa Department of History and Archives is urging the legislature now in session to pass a bill establishing a War Memorial Building Commission to plan for the post-war construction of an archives building. The commission, if created, would provide for the erection of "a modern hall of archives . . . free from all ordinary hazards" in which the state could preserve and make available for use its records, particularly those pertaining to Iowa's participation in the Civil, Spanish American, and World Wars. Designed as an addition or annex to the present State Historical Memorial and Art Building, the structure would cost approximately $900,000.

Maryland

The Hall of Records announces the acquisition of the Charles County Maryland court and land records. The court records from the beginning of the county in 1658 to 1788 have already been transferred to the Hall of Records. About one-third of the earlier land records have also been transferred and the rest will come as photostated copies of the originals are returned to the county seat at LaPlata. The Charles County records have for long been regarded as one of the most complete sets of early county records in America. As soon as they have been repaired and put in order they will form, with the records of the Register of Wills at Charles County which are already at the Hall of Records, one of the most valuable collections at Annapolis.

Dr. Raphael Semmes, Maryland historian and authority on the colonial period, has been appointed editor of the *Archives of Maryland*, which are published by the Maryland Historical Society. Dr. Semmes, who becomes the fifth editor since 1883, when the society began publishing them by authority of the state, succeeds Dr. J. Hall Pleasants, who had been editor since 1927. A Baltimorean, Dr. Semmes is a graduate of the Harvard University Law School and holds a doctorate in history from the Johns Hopkins University. He taught history for several years at Trinity College, in Connecticut, and at the University of Virginia, and later was director of the Baltimore Municipal Museum and librarian of the Maryland Historical Society.

During his term as editor, Dr. Pleasants completed sixteen volumes, to bring to sixty-one the total number of volumes of the archives, which contain the original texts of many executive papers and the proceedings of the Maryland Assembly, and the courts. Dr. Pleasants was relieved of his editorial duties at his own request, but will continue as one of the vice-presidents of the society.

Nevada

Miss Jeanne Wier, secretary of the Nevada State Historical Society writes that "we are concentrating all our energies during this Legislative session on getting a building and I think we have an excellent chance of success. Until we have more room it is useless to talk of getting further legislation enacted toward a better archiving system." The sixteenth biennial report of the society presents some facts about the need for a state records and historical building in Reno.

New York

The New York Historical Society has announced its intention to publish its General Horatio Gates Papers, 1726 (1750-1803) 1816, in a series of eleven or twelve volumes. The important decade of the Revolution accounts for the bulk of the material, with some five thousand letters to and from Gates, including 148 letters from Washington alone. Although this is by far the largest and most important collection of Gates material in existence, several hundred Gates letters and related documents have been located in a dozen other libraries. In order that the society's publication may be as definitive as possible, an attempt will be made to arrange for the inclusion of that material in the projected volumes and the editor of the society will welcome information from any source concerning other extant Gates material, particularly in private collections.

The New York Historical Society also announces the preparation of "A Dictionary of American Artists to 1860" and solicits data on unrecorded artists for inclusion in that book. The work will be as complete a listing as possible of every painter, illustrator, cartoonist, sculptor, wood carver, sil-

houettist, engraver, lithographer or other type of graphic artist who worked in America in or prior to 1860 or was born not later than 1840. If you know of such an artist—however insignificant he may be—the society will appreciate receiving from you information about him, *and the source or sources of your information.* Communications should be addressed to the editor of the society, Charles E. Baker.

Wisconsin

A guide to manuscripts of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, edited by Alice E. Smith, curator of manuscripts, has been published by the society to facilitate the use of manuscripts in its famous collections.

With the exception of the Draper manuscripts, all classes of manuscripts and records owned by the society, personal papers, archives of federal, state and local governments, and records of organizations, have been treated in one alphabetical sequence in the guide. No attempt was made in the guide to evaluate the manuscripts in the collections, nor to interpret information in them. The small book is designed principally to tell what information is included in the 720,000 pieces and 2,500 volumes housed in the society's manuscript division.